1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves.

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*.

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls.

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours' influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded, since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

762 The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity.
837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's
[626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 (In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals
609 of the men,) they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood.

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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562 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from 858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little 855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned 291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. I, 1886, p. 192.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife, as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
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with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.